

Claims 1 and 7 were rejected as anticipated by KISHINO et al. 5,721,561. Claim 1 has been amended and reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Amended claim 1 provides, among other features, ^① {that the phosphor layer and the two electrodes are on facing surfaces of the inner space.} In contrast, KISHINO et al. disclose that the phosphor layer and the electrodes are the same surface of the inner space.

Further, claim 1 provides that each of the electrodes has linear parts, that each have branches, and that the linear parts of the electrodes alternate. ^② {This is illustrated, by way of example, in Figure 5 of the present application. KISHINO et al. do not disclose that each of the electrodes has linear parts that each have branches where the linear parts of the electrodes alternate.} The electrodes 106-1, -2, -3 in KISHINO et al. Figure 22 do not correspond to the claimed linear parts because they do not have branches as claimed. Figure 17 of KISHINO et al. shows that one of the electrodes can have branches (e.g., B11 and G21); but the phosphor layer is on the same side and the other of the two electrodes does not have the claimed branches. Accordingly, amended claim 1 avoids the rejection under §102.

The remaining claims were rejected as unpatentable over further references. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested because the further references do not make up for the shortcomings of KISHINO et al.

noted above.

Claims 10-15 have been added and are believed to be allowable because the applied art does not disclose or suggest a device with a phosphor layer on an inner surface of one of two substrates and first and second electrodes on an inner surface of the other of the two substrates, where each of the first and second electrodes has a linearly extended connecting part and plural fingers extending generally perpendicular to the connecting part, where each of the plural fingers has two parallel branches, and where the fingers are interdigitated in the manner claimed.

By way of further explanation, the flat-type light-emitting device disclosed herein is a light-emitting device using discharge occurring in the inner space 11 of the envelope filled with a discharge medium (e.g., a mixture of an inert gas such as Ar and Hg vapor). A phosphor layer 6 is formed on the inner surface of the front plate 2. A pair of comb-shaped electrodes 7 and 8 is formed on the inner surface of the rear plate 3.

The electrode 7 has n linear parts 7-1 to 7-n connected perpendicularly to the connection part 7A. The parts 7-1 to 7-n are arranged alternately at regular intervals. Similarly, the electrode 8 has n linear parts 8-1 to 8-n connected perpendicularly to the connection part 8A. The parts 8-1 to 8-n are arranged alternately at regular intervals. The parts 7-1 to 7-n and 8-1 to 8-n are alternately arranged at regular intervals

along the connection parts 7A and 8A, as shown in Figs. 5, 6A and 6B.

Each of the linear parts 7-2 to 7-n of the electrode 7 has branches 7-2a and 7-2b, or 7-3a and 7-3b,... Similarly, each of the linear parts 8-1 to 8-(n-1) of the electrode 8 has branches 8-1a and 8-1b, or 8-2a and 8-2b,... All these branches are parallel to each other.

With the device of the invention having the above-described structure, AC discharge will occur among all the adjoining branches 7-2a and 7-2b, or 7-3a and 7-3b,..., and 8-1a and 8-1b, or 8-2a and 8-2b,... Therefore, there is an advantage that the discharge distribution will be improved. That is, an approximately even or uniform distribution of the light intensity is realized without luminance degradation.

Unlike the device of the invention, KISHINO's device is a "field-emission display device", in which no discharge will occur even if a voltage is applied across the electrodes. This means that the inside of the envelope is held in vacuum and no discharge medium is introduced therein. Therefore, KISHINO's device is quite different from the device of the invention on this point.

Moreover, KISHINO's Figure 7 seems to show a similar electrode pattern to that of the invention. However, this is quite different from the invention. This is because no voltage is applied across the electrodes A1 and A2 but across the

electrodes C1 to Cn and A1 or A2, and because discharge will not occur simultaneously for the electrodes C1 to Cn. Therefore, KISHINO's device does not have the advantage of the invention described above.

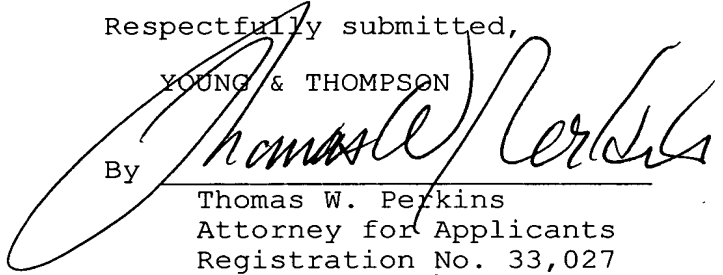
In view of the present amendment and the foregoing remarks, it is believed that the present application has been placed in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the abstract, specification and claims. The attached page is captioned "VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE."

Respectfully submitted,

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February 20, 2003